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ABSTRACT

The viewpoints of graduate deans, continuing education deans, and chief liberal arts academic officers about the relative availability of institutional funds to support teaching and research are compared. Distinctions between research universities and teaching colleges in funding teaching and research activities are also explored, based on the perspective of chief liberal arts academic officers. Data were obtained through three administrator surveys. Graduate deans generally believed that institutions more often provide excellent funding for activities in support of teaching than for activities in support of research, except for research sabbaticals. Continuing education deans and chief liberal arts academic officers believed activities in support of teaching to be generally better funded than activities in support of research, except funding for computers. Research universities appeared to fund research activities better than teaching colleges, but the differences between research universities and teaching colleges were much more limited in supporting teaching-related activities. Data are included on the ratings of the three sets of administrators on funding for various activities in support of teaching and research. (SW)

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SUPPORTING TEACHING IN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES AND TEACHING COLLEGES*

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Policy statements about the relative importance of teaching are significant indicators of institutional intentions. The mission statements which open university catalogs, long-range planning documents, and pronouncements of the board of trustees are intended to reflect institutional values and priorities. The translation of these priorities into budgetary support for specific activities may, however, provide more direct evidence of administrative behavior.

A widespread assumption in American higher education is that teaching colleges, by virtue of their emphasis on teaching, support the teaching enterprise with relatively greater levels of funding than do research universities. In this paper we will compare the viewpoints of three sets of administrators (graduate deans, continuing education deans, and chief liberal arts academic officers) about the relative availability of institutional funds to support teaching and research generally. Distinctions between research universities and teaching colleges in funding teaching and research activities will also be explored from the perspective of chief liberal arts academic officers.

Data represented here were developed through three surveys of administrative officers in American institutions of higher education conducted by the authors, graduate deans (1982), continuing education deans (1984), and chief liberal arts academic officers (1984). Respondents were asked questions in a number of areas including the availability of institutional funding in support of both teaching and research.

Table 1 depicts the opinions of graduate deans about institutional funding. Graduate deans, usually perceived as strong advocates of research activity, generally believe that institutions more often provide excellent funding for activities in support of teaching than for activities in support of research. A notable exception is sabbaticals to do research. This tendency is evident even when the good and excellent ratings are combined,

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except in the additional case of funds to buy computers. Support for teaching related activities appears, however, to be uneven from their vantage point. Sabbaticals to improve knowledge, perhaps the most visible type of support, were viewed as having excellent funding by 21 percent of the graduate deans surveyed. But such routine support as funding for library acquisitions, travel to conferences, offering graduate courses often enough, and graduate teaching assistants received excellent ratings in the 8 to 15 percent range. Addressing the data from a negative perspective shows that almost two-thirds believe funding for travel to conferences is poor or fair, approximately half hold similar views about support for graduate teaching assistants and library journals, while a third or more perceive funding for sabbaticals to improve knowledge and library journals to be less than good. In general, graduate deans believe that support for teaching is inadequate and uneven.

Table 2 indicates that continuing education deans hold views of the availability of institutional funding for activities in support of both teaching and research similar to those of graduate deans. This tendency is evident in the excellent category and also when the good and excellent categories are combined. Continuing education deans believe that funding is excellent more often for activities in support of teaching than for those in support of research, with the exception of funds for purchasing computers which ties with funding for library books at 16 percent. These deans are not as optimistic as graduate deans about funding for sabbaticals, whether to improve knowledge or to do research. Support rated as excellent for other teaching related activities ranges from 10 percent (graduate teaching assistants) to 16 percent (library books). When the good and excellent categories are combined, an impression of unevenness in funding patterns becomes evident (37 percent for teaching assistants and 66 percent for library books). Looking at the data another way, approximately half of the continuing education deans believe funding to be poor or fair for such teaching activities as sabbaticals to improve knowledge, library journals, and travel to conferences while almost two-thirds hold similar views about support for graduate teaching assistants.

Chief liberal arts academic officers also believe activities in support of teaching to be generally better funded than activities in support of research, excepting funding for computers. Again sabbaticals to improve knowledge and to do research head the respective lists. Positive support for teaching activities is not highly rated, although combining the good and excellent categories shows chief liberal arts academic officers to be more optimistic than graduate or continuing education deans about library acquisitions generally. Liberal arts officers also perceive support for selected research activities (graduate research assistants and grant development personnel) as more limited than graduate or continuing education deans.

The picture that emerges from these three views of the availability of institutional funding is complex. As noted, there tends to be more agreement about funding patterns among the three groups than disagreement. Where differences are evident, disciplinary orientations may be instructive. Generally, the individuals surveyed believe that institutions tend to fund activities in support of teaching more fully than activities in support of research, with the important exceptions of sabbaticals to do research and computers. Funding for activities in support of teaching is believed to be uneven and inadequate, with sabbaticals to improve knowledge receiving the most frequent excellent rating. Combining good and excellent ratings, however, places funding for such sabbaticals in the same range as several more routine activities such as library acquisitions and frequency of graduate course offerings. Travel to conferences and support for graduate teaching assistants are at the bottom of the funding availability spectrum for teaching related activities.

Are there differences on these categories of funding among institutions that traditionally emphasize teaching and those that emphasize research? Universities with significant research missions offer graduate degrees and are relatively large as measured by the number of faculty, total students, and graduate students. Table 4 presents findings from one survey that exemplifies the other data sets. The most striking facet of Table 4 is that research universities appear to fund research activities better than teaching colleges, but the differences between research universities and teaching colleges are much more limited in supporting teaching related activities. More specifically, significant positive correlations are noted between faculty size, total student body size, and the number of graduate students on the one hand and every listed dimension of support for research except for funding to purchase computers. Similar correlations were found between the highest degree offered and all research dimensions except computers and research equipment.

Support for activities related to teaching varies with only a few institutional characteristics. The strongest relationships, between support for scheduling graduate courses often enough and both the highest degree offered and the number of graduate students, are little more than tautologies. Funding for sabbaticals to improve knowledge is more likely to be found in research universities while funding for graduate assistants is positively correlated with faculty size. The evidence from the chief liberal arts academic officers suggests, with these noted exceptions, that research universities and teaching colleges do not differ in their support for activities related to teaching.

We believe this conclusion can be explained in part by the stratification of the American higher education system. Those institutions where teaching is the primary mission tend to be community colleges, small liberal arts colleges whether church-related or secular, and state colleges and universities. These are precisely the institutions that are most likely to

experience financial difficulty. Many private liberal arts colleges, for example, have no endowments to fall back on, are non-selective in admission policies, and struggle daily to balance the budget. Many are predicted to close by the end of the decade. In such circumstances, even the primary institutional thrust, teaching, suffers from resource deprivation. Publicly supported institutions, while unlikely to go out of existence, are facing either funding cutbacks or marginal increases that support day-to-day operations but not new initiatives. Both public and private research universities tend to experience better financial conditions. Consider the land grant institutions viewed as national leaders by federal and state legislators or the circumstances at selective well-endowed private institutions. Not only is funding available to support research in such cases, but important secondary missions such as teaching benefit from the overall availability of funds.

Conclusion

In this paper we have explored the views of graduate deans, continuing education deans, and chief liberal arts academic officers about the availability of funds to support teaching-related activities. These administrators believe funding in support of teaching to be better than funding in support of research, but support for teaching is uneven and inadequate. When teaching colleges and research universities were compared, significant differences were found in support for research while few differences were found in support of teaching.

We urge academic administrators to reconsider their funding of activities in support of excellence in teaching by finding answers to the following questions.

* Is administrative support of teaching consistent across the campus and for activities of comparable value in the same department?

* Is teaching excellence supported at least as well as excellence in research?

* Are teaching support programs designed to maintain faculty morale at a high level?

* Are teaching support programs communicated clearly to all faculty members through a variety of mechanisms?

Administrators who are able to answer all four of these questions in the affirmative can rest securely in the knowledge that they are investing institutional funds in the most productive growth industry available—the teaching excellence of the faculty.

Table 1

Availability of Institutional Funds to Support Teaching and Research: Graduate Deans

Funding Area	Funding Availability*				
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N
In support of teaching					
Sabbaticals to improve knowledge	21%	21%	37%	21%	326
Graduate teaching assistantships	22%	29%	37%	12%	304
Offering graduate courses often enough	6%	23%	56%	15%	320
Library journals	8%	38%	43%	11%	320
Library books	8%	35%	45%	12%	329
Travel to conferences	21%	42%	29%	8%	338
In support of research					
Sabbaticals to do research	22%	21%	34%	23%	321
Graduate research assistants	29%	34%	31%	6%	302
Grant development personnel	27%	37%	29%	7%	314
Research equipment	22%	45%	30%	3%	322
Computers	14%	37%	39%	9%	326
Research by untenured faculty	27%	37%	31%	5%	329
Research by senior faculty	25%	46%	26%	4%	329
Travel to develop grants	35%	33%	26%	7%	328

*Where percentages do not sum 100, it is due to statistical rounding procedures.

Table 2

Availability of Institutional Funds to Support Teaching and Research: Continuing Education Deans

Funding Area	Funding Availability* Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N
In support of teaching					
Sabbaticals to improve knowledge	23%	27%	36%	14%	347
Graduate teaching assistants	30%	33%	27%	10%	283
Offering courses often enough	12%	28%	49%	12%	339
Library journals	13%	36%	39%	11%	350
Library books	6%	29%	50%	16%	374
Travel to conferences	17%	36%	35%	12%	384
In support of research					
Sabbaticals to do research	25%	28%	35%	12%	217
Graduate research assistants	4[illegible]%	34%	20%	4%	259
Grant development personnel	[illegible]%	37%	29%	7%	350
Research equipment	23[illegible]	39%	30%	8%	342
Computers	14%	29%	41%	16%	371
Research by untenured faculty	36%	39%	22%	3%	332
Research by senior faculty	28%	39%	26%	7%	333
Travel to develop grants	39%	34%	21%	7%	352

*Where percentages do not sum 100, it is due to statistical rounding procedures.

Table 3

Availability of Institutional Funds to Support Teaching and Research: Chief Liberal Arts Academic Officers

	Funding Availability*				
Funding Area	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	N
In support of teaching					
Sabbaticals to improve knowledge	20%	21%	35%	24%	352
Graduate teaching assistants	26%	31%	31%	12%	239
Offering graduate courses often enough	11%	24%	52%	14%	219
Library journals	9%	30%	49%	13%	357
Library books	7%	26%	51%	16%	369
Travel to conferences	14%	43%	32%	11%	369
In support of research					
Sabbaticals to do research	25%	19%	31%	25%	232
Graduate research assistants	42%	37%	17%	3%	185
Grant development personnel	34%	39%	24%	4%	334
Research equipment	30%	40%	25%	5%	349
Computers	9%	30%	44%	16%	356
Research by untenured faculty	35%	36%	25%	4%	346
Research by senior faculty	35%	37%	23%	5%	341
Travel to develop grants	46%	30%	21%	4%	352

*Where percentages do not sum 100, it is due to statistical rounding procedures.

Table 4

Relationships Between Institutional Characteristics and Resources to Support Teaching and Research: Chief Liberal Arts Academic Officers[a]

Resources	Institutional Characteristics: Highest Degree Offered	Private/ Public	Rural/ Urban	Faculty Size	Total Student Body	Graduate Student Body
In support of teaching						
Sabbaticals to improve knowledge	.11**	.03	-.01	.11**	.14***	.11*
Graduate teaching assistants	.08	.03	.01	.11*	.03	.00
Offering graduate courses often enough	.24***	-.06	.05	.04	.03	.17**
Library journals	-.01	-.10*	.00	-.03	-.02	-.01
Library books	-.07	-.06	-.01	-.02	.00	-.06
In support of research						
Sabbaticals to do research	.11*	.00	.04	.16**	.17**	.12*
Graduate research assistants	.24***	.07	.05	.33***	.20**	.23***
Grant development personnel	.17***	.08*	.03	.19***	.18***	.15***
Research equipment	.06	.02	.10*	.19***	.11**	.07
Computers	-.02	-.03	.08*	.04	.07	-.02
Research by untenured faculty	.14**	.10*	.10*	.32***	.27***	.13**
Research by senior faculty	.14**	.10*	.08*	.26***	.23***	.12**
Travel to develop grants	.18***	.06	.11*	.19***	.16***	.15**

[a] All correlations are Tau b.
* Statistically significant at less than .05.
** Statistically significant at less than .01.
*** Statistically significant at less than .001.